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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we praise You for Your availability to us. You are Jehovah-Shammah, who promises to be with us, whenever and wherever we need You throughout this day. You have assured us that You will never leave or forsake us. You remind us of Your love when we are insecure, Your strength when we are stretched beyond our resources, Your guidance when we must make decisions, Your hope when we are tempted to be discouraged, Your patience when difficult people distress us, Your joy when we get grim.

In response, we offer our availability to You. We open our minds to receive Your divine intelligence, our responsibilities to glorify You in our work, our relationships to express Your amazing affirmation, our faces to radiate Your care and concern. As You will be here for us today, we pledge ourselves to do the work of government to Your glory. We are ready to receive what we will need each hour—each challenge, each opportunity. This day is a gift, and we accept it gratefully. You are our Lord and Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE DEWINE, a Senator from the State of Ohio, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, today the Senate will immediately begin the final 3 hours of debate on H.R. 4444, the China PNTR legislation.

Under the previous order, the Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly party conferences to meet. When the Senate reconvenes at 2:15, the Senate will have two back-to-back votes. The first vote is on the final passage of the PNTR bill, and the second vote is on the cloture motion to proceed to the H-1B visa legislation.

Following the votes, it is expected that the Senate will begin debate on the H-1B visa bill, with the water resources development bill, or any appropriations conference report available for action.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

TO AUTHORIZE EXTENSION OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 90 minutes of debate under the control of each leader.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. DEWINE. I yield to my colleague.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator DASCHLE, I yield 5 minutes to Senator LAUTENBERG and 5 minutes to Senator MURRAY when Senator DEWINE completes his remarks.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, for the benefit of my colleagues, I yield myself 30 minutes. I candidly don't expect to take 30 minutes. For those Senators who wish to speak after me, it will probably be a shorter period of time than 30 minutes.

Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the legislation before us—H.R. 4444, the legislation extending Permanent Normal Trading Relations to the People's Republic of China or PNTR. As we approach's today's final vote, I want to make it clear that I believe strongly in free and fair trade. And, I support efforts aimed at increasing free and fair trade with China. However, as we approach the vote, I think we must take a few minutes and try to put the current debate into its proper perspective. That is what I intend to do.

Passing PNTR will result in lower trade barriers and more U.S. sales to China. We know that. But, the extent of our increased sales will depend on factors beyond our control. Our ability to send more exports to China depends largely on China's continued economic growth, its compliance with the bilateral agreement, and its development of a middle-class.

While increasing trade with China certainly is important, we must put this current debate into its proper context. We need to view this debate as it relates to both our worldwide trade policy and to our foreign policy and national security interests. With this broader perspective in mind, it becomes very clear that passing the PNTR legislation is just one part of our overall relationship with China and one part of our overall global trade policy. There remain other pressing foreign policy issues and other trade issues that await our next President, the next Congress, and the American people. Let me explain.

The fact is, as we all know, the United States is a leader in the area of free trade. If we fail to pass the PNTR legislation, we would be sending a signal to the world that the United States wants to isolate China. That's a signal we don't want to send. Both by word and deed, the United States must be the world's leader in promoting free trade. At the same time, though, we also don't want to send China—and the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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